

Ozark

National Scenic Riverways



Superintendent Bill Black

Monday, October 6, 2014

Riverways Reflections

I hope everyone has been enjoying the nice fall weather in the outdoors at Ozark National Scenic Riverways. This is truly one of the most beautiful times of the year to enjoy floating and boating on the river, horseback riding, or taking a hike to some of the special natural and cultural resources hidden in the park. It's a time that lends itself to gathering together with family and friends to enjoy a variety of traditional activities along the rivers. If you haven't had a chance to stop and appreciate the fall season, I invite you to do that here at ONSR.

The perfect opportunity to enjoy the season is at the Haunting in the Hills at Alley Spring on October 11. This event is filled with traditional activities, music, demonstrations, and good food from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Then, in the evening from 6-9 p.m., candle lanterns and luminaries will light your way to storytelling stations around Alley Mill. This event is held the same weekend as the annual Scenic Riverways Arts and Crafts Show in Eminence, which also offers lots of crafts, demonstrations, food, and live music.

If you visit Alley Mill you'll notice that most of the restoration work has been completed. A temporary accessible walkway into the mill has been installed so that all visitors can fully enjoy the mill and the deck overlooking the spring pool this fall. Unfortunately, the permanent accessible walkway has not been completed due to delays in receiving the final walkway design. However, it is our intent to have the permanent walkway installed before Alley Mill opens again next year.

We are currently planning for two managed deer hunts to be held at Big Spring. Because the Big Spring area is generally managed as a "no hunting" zone, the deer population density has reached a level where negative impacts on park resources have been observed. These managed hunts can help reduce those impacts and improve the overall health of deer in the Big Spring area. One hunt is a managed archery hunt that will take place in December. The other is a managed hunt for those members of our military who have sustained permanent mobility impairments in the line of service.

The Wounded Warrior Mobility Impaired hunt will be held in November and is open to ten randomly selected applicants who must apply by October 15. These hunters will be able to use center-fire rifles and take two deer each during the hunt. I am especially pleased that the National Park Service is able to provide this opportunity to honor individuals who have sacrificed for our freedom. During last year's Wounded Warrior hunt we had a number of local folks and businesses who donated time or supplies to help make the hunt a success, and it appeared that those folks got as much out of volunteering as the hunters themselves. This is an inspirational group to be around and if you would like to participate in some way, please contact Kim Houf at 573-323-4941.

I am happy to report that the General Management Plan is moving toward the final steps of completion. We have spent several months carefully considering a wide range of public comments and making revisions to the Draft General Management Plan. Our proposed revisions will soon be reviewed by our Regional Director and the Director of the National Park Service. The final plan should be ready for release to the public near the end of 2014.

The park will be operating on a continuing resolution through early December. Although we will be operating basically at our 2010 funding level, we will be filling a few positions over the winter because of a number of vacancies due to retirements. I encourage anyone interested in working with us to become familiar with the USAJOBS website at www.usajobs.gov, which is where our jobs are advertised.

Be safe and enjoy your Ozark National Scenic Riverways!

Ozark National Scenic Riverways preserves the free-flowing Current and Jacks Fork Rivers, the surrounding natural resources, and the unique cultural heritage of the Ozark people. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/ozar or Facebook.

Comments? Write to:

Superintendent
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
P. O. Box 490
Van Buren, Missouri 63965

Phone
573-323-4236

E-mail
ozar_superintendent@nps.gov

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